MARVEL

5

GAMBIT

CLAREMONT
KOTIAN
GRUNDETJERN

Remy LeBeau is a thief. Growing up in New Orleans, he honed his craft from a young age as part of the Thieves Guild.

He is also a **mutant**, and with his power to draw out the potential energy of any given object, he can make even something as harmless as a simple playing card an item of explosive force to be reckoned with.

Remy has used his powers and skills to lead a life of adventure and intrigue, traveling and stealing and gallivanting under the nom de guerre...

Gambit's devil-may-care lifestyle has crossed his path with that of **Ororo Munroe**, A.K.A. **Storm**--the leader of the mutant heroes known as the **X-Men**. But a recent encounter with villains has left Ororo de-aged back to childhood, with her memory and mutant power to control the weather unreliable at best.

Remy has taken young Ororo under his wing, advancing the thieving skills she first developed as a child on the streets of Cairo. On their latest adventure, a near catastrophe on the road landed Remy and 'Ro's car in the Mississippi River. With the help of **Marissa DeCastro** and her mother, **Doctor Gabriella DeCastro**, 'Ro survived, but not before meeting her ancestor **Ashaké** on the astral plane. While Ororo was recuperating, Remy butted heads with **Dominic Solarz**, a local developer trying to force the DeCastros out of their home. Solarz and his men kidnapped 'Ro and Gabriella, but Remy and Marissa managed to rescue them with an assist from Ashaké. In the aftermath, Solarz was visited by an alien named **Bounty**, who was hunting down Remy's comrade--and interstellar singing sensation--**Lila Cheney**. The two pursued Remy to Lila's next concert as a means of catching the teleporting Lila off guard and using her friends as leverage. After a hard-fought battle, Remy managed to work out a tense truce with Bounty. Meanwhile, Solarz was recruited by another set of intergalactic bounty hunters chasing Lila. Marissa discovered these new threats, but was stabbed by Solarz before she could warn the others...

COVER ARTISTS:
Whilce Portacio & Alex Sinclair

VARIANT COVER ARTIST:
Russell Dauterman

PRODUCTION DESIGN:
Nick Russell

EDITOR'S NOTE:
This story takes place in the previously unexplored time period only glimpsed during UNCANNY X-MEN #267.

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GAMBIT

TYPICAL REMY MOMENT: HE GOES LOOKING FOR THE WOMAN WITH WHOM HE MAY WELL BE FALLING IN LOVE.

INSTEAD, HE FINDS TROUBLE.

BOUNTY

AND IN THE PROCESS, MAKES A NEW FRIEND.

'RO

HIS OTHER FRIENDS DON'T FEEL ANYWHERE NEAR SO SANGUINE.

ONE OF THEIR OWN IS MISSING.

DR. GABRIELLA DeCASTRO

THE LONGER THAT LASTS.

THE MORE WORRIED THEY BECOME.

BONEHEAD

RRRREMMMYYYY!

MARISSA DeCASTRO

IT TURNS OUT--

--WITH GOOD REASON.

REMY RULES!

BY CHRIS CLAREMONT & SID KOTIAN

ESPEN GRUNDETJERN COLOR ARTIST
VC's CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER

DREW BAUMGARTNER ASST. EDITOR
MARK BASSO EDITOR
JORDAN D. WHITE GROUP EDITOR
C.B. CEBULSKI EDITOR IN CHIEF

WELCOME TO HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA, HOME OF NASA'S FAMED MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER--

--WHICH TONIGHT IS HOSTING A CONCERT...

...BY ROCK STAR LILA CHENEY.

LIKE REMY, SHE HAS SUPER-POWERS.

LIKE REMY, SHE'S A THIEF.

HE ROAMS THE WORLD, SHE ROAMS GALAXIES!

REMY'S JOB IS TO FIND MARISSA. LILA'S IS TO KEEP THE AUDIENCE'S ATTENTION FOCUSED ON HER.

WHY'S MY BABY SCREAMING?

DUNNO, GABRIELLA.

SOONER WE FIND HER, SOONER WE'LL KNOW.

UHHH, REMY--?

NAME'S BOUNTY.

SHE'S A FRIEND. SHE'S HERE T' HELP.

I'VE HEARD THAT SCREAM BEFORE.

IT'S MADE BY THE PREY OF A BOUNTY HUNTER NAMED BONEHEAD.

YOU DO NOT WANT TO MESS WITH HIM OR HIS MATES--

--SUNAMI AND CANNIBIRD.

LI'L LATE F'R THAT, CHÈRE, AH BE THINKIN'.

IS THIS THE MEAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, BOUNTY?

SORRY, *I* FOUND HER FIRST.

I'M *BONEHEAD.*

SHOULD'VE ACCEPTED OUR OFFER, BOUNTY.

LOOKS LIKE OUR NEW FRIEND SOLARZ GOES HOME *RICH.*

YOU'LL JUST BE *MEAT.*

SAME AS *MARISSA.*

MAMA--

--REMY--

--I'M SO *SORRY!*

SHE'S AS SPIRITED AS SHE IS TASTY. BEST MEAL EVER--

--BODY *AND* SOUL!

YOU HOLD ON, BABY GIRL.

WHATEVER IT TAKES, I'LL *SAVE* YOU.

AH SHOULD *NEVER* HAVE PULLED YOU INTO THIS LIFE O' MINE.

AH'LL REGRET THAT T' MY DYIN' DAY.

AH GOT NO RIGHT T' EXPECT F'RGIVENESS, 'RISSA.

BUT AH WILL GUARANTEE YOU *VENGEANCE!*

REMY, *NO!*

THE TRANSITION ISN'T COMPLETE!

SHE CAN STILL BE *SAVED!*

THY WORDS, A WASTE OF TIME, FEMALE.

THE WALKER'S FATE IS SEALED--

--AS IS *THINE OWN!*

WHAT NEED FOR BIOLOGICAL EYES, MEAT?

TECH IS SO MUCH MORE EFFICIENT.

LIKE *MY* BODY--JUST NEEDS THE PROPER *FUEL* TO RUN IT.

THAT'S WHERE *YOU* COME IN.

WHERE YOUR FACE LEADS, YOUR BODY'LL FOLLOW, TILL THERE'S NOTHING LEFT BUT *BONES!*

THE HARDER YOU FIGHT, THE MORE IT HURTS--

--THE MORE *DELICIOUS* THE TRIUMPH.

AND AS FOR YOUR WOULD-BE SAVIOR?

SLAMM!

BRINE, YOU ANIMALS WILL FEEL.

FROM WATER, YOU CAME.

TO WATER, YOU'LL RETURN.

YUM!

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FIRST--YOUR SCREAMS I WILL HEAR!

YEEEAUGH!

THE SHOCK OF THE ALIEN'S CLAWS CUTTING TO THE BONE IS AGONY ENOUGH--

--BEING DRENCHED IN SALTWATER MAKES IT HORRIBLY WORSE.

FORGOTTEN YOU, I HAVE NOT.

NICE MOVES.

WORK FOR MY DINNER, WILL I.

DR. DECASTRO-- IGNORE THE PAIN. JUST TAKE MY HAND AND HOLD ON AS TIGHT AS YOU CAN--

--WE'VE GOT TO GO!

YOU CAN'T SAVE US BOTH, CHILD.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

SELF-SACRIFICE.

SOMETHING YOUR KIND LOVES TO DO.

NO DIFFERENCE, IT WILL MAKE.

SOONER, LATER...

...YOU BOTH, I WILL DROWN.

PRECIOUS, IT IS.

TRICKING ME, THE "WALKER" TRIES.

FOOL'S PLOY DESERVES FOOL'S FATE.

OWHW!

YOUR TURN, BABY GIRL.

‹ASHAKÉ-- ANCESTOR, HELP ME! I DUNNO WHAT TO DO!›*

*TRANSLATED FROM ARABIC. --MINDFUL MARK

‹HAVE YOU LEARNED NOTHING FROM MY TRAINING, LITTLE WIND-RIDER?›

‹I DID NOT SIMPLY TEACH YOU HOW TO FIGHT.›

‹I TAUGHT YOU--BOTH-- HOW TO WIN!›

‹NOW PROVE TO ME...›

‹...I DID NOT DO SO IN VAIN.›

I'M A DOCTOR.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

SWORN TO PRESERVE ALL LIFE.

BUT I'M ALSO A MOTHER--

--AND WHEN MONSTERS LIKE YOU--

--CHOOSE TO THREATEN MY DAUGHTER--

--YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE!

WOW!

WHAT THY COMPANIONS HATH DONE TO *SUNAMI*...

...SHALT *PALE*, BOUNTY, IN COMPARISON TO THE FATE AWAITING THEE.

CANNIBIRD SHALT MAKE THEE *SCREAM!*

HEARD THAT THREAT BEFORE, WINGLESS.

AIN'T HAPPENED YET.

THEN THIS TIME'LL BE BOTH FIRST--

--AND *LAST!*

FOR GOD'S SAKE, *STOP!*

NOT LISTENING, MEAT, DOESN'T CARE.

FIGURE YOU'RE ALL HERE BECAUSE THAT'S PART OF THE PLAN.

NOT OUR FAULT YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THE OUTCOME.

YOU AND YOUR BOYFRIEND DO MAKE A LOVELY PAIR.

FIGURE I'LL MUSH YOUR SKULLS, SO YOUR BONES'LL BE ALIKE IN AGONY FOR AS LONG AS I FEEL LIKE HOLDING ON TO YOU BOTH.

THEN, OF COURSE, YOU'LL BE *FORGOTTEN.*

AND FOR WHAT YOUR MOTHER JUST DID TO SUNAMI--

--WELL, SWEET MARISSA, JUST *IMAGINE* WHAT I'LL DO TO HER.

Y'ALL TALK WAY TOO MUCH, *HOM.*

AH'LL LET M' DEEDS SPEAK FOR ME.

AH ALSO KNOW HOW MACHINES FIT T'GETHER...

...WHICH MEANS WHERE THEY BE VULNERABLE.

EVEN THROUGH ARMOR.

NONE O' THIS BE ABOUT RAW POWER. Y'ALL GOT THAT IN SPADES.

IT BE ABOUT ***PRECISION.***

KNOWIN' JUST ***HOW*** T' HIT--

--AN' WHERE.

THA'S WHAT MAKES TH' DIFF'RENCE.

HAVING MY RIFLE GIVES YOU NOTHING.

IT IS PROGRAMMED TO FIRE ONLY FOR ME.

NO WORRIES, *HOM.* FIRST THING LILA TAUGHT ME...

...WAS HOW T' PICK THE LOCKS ON TOYS LIKE THIS.

D D BOOM

MORE FOOL YOU, THIEF--

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

--I HAVE LOTS OF OTHER TOOLS AT MY DISPOSAL.

REMY-- *NO*--BONEHEAD'S TURNING ME--MY BODY--INTO A *WEAPON!*

I CAN'T STOP HIM FROM *FIRING!*

GAMBIT-- DUCK!

IN YOUR DEBT, BOUNTY!

KA-CHOOM!

WHERE BE BONEHEAD?

GONE AFTER LILA, MOST LIKE. SHE'S THE BIG PRIZE FOR THEM.

LEAVE CANNIBIRD TO ME, CAJUN.

YOU GO SAVE YOUR LADIES.

ACROSS THE DARKNESS, CENTER STAGE IN A BLINDING CASCADE OF LIGHT, IS **LILA CHENEY'S** COURT.

SHE'S BEEN SINGING, DANCING, TALKING FOR OVER AN HOUR AND SHE'S JUST GETTING STARTED.

THE AUDIENCE **LOVES** HER.

WITH **ONE** EXCEPTION.

FOR **DOMINIC SOLARZ**, THIS IS PERSONAL. REMY AND MARISSA HUMILIATED HIM.

THIS IS HIS WAY OF GETTING EVEN--

--AND WALKING AWAY **RICH.**

KILLING LILA MEANS NOTHING, NO MORE THAN THE OTHER PEOPLE HE'S RUINED IN HIS CAREER.

ALL THAT MATTERS IS THE MONEY.

THIS IS THE MOMENT, MEAT, AND THERE'S ***NOTHING*** EITHER YOU OR YOUR FRIENDS CAN DO TO STOP IT FROM HAPPENING.

LILA CHENEY'S AS GOOD AS ***DEAD.***

I AM ***NOT*** "MEAT."

I AM NOT YOUR ***TOY.***

I AM GUNNERY SERGEANT MARISSA DECASTRO, USMC.

I AM HUMAN. I AM A WOMAN.

I AM FREE!

I WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU'D MAKE YOUR MOVE, BONEHEAD.

MY TURN.

THOK

THANKS, ALISON.

PLAY IT LOUD, MY DARLINGS, AN' PLAY IT FUN!

LAST THING WE WANT IS FOR ALL THESE NICE FOLKS TO GET A GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S WHAT BACKSTAGE.

WE'RE WHO THEY CAME TO SEE. LET'S SHOW 'EM A SET THEY'LL NEVER FORGET!

I WILL END YOU, THIEF--

--AND THAT IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE FATE IN STORE FOR THE PATHETIC SPIRIT WITHIN THIS SKULL.

WANNA BET?

YOU TOOK SOMEONE *PRECIOUS* T' ME, BONEHEAD.

AH'M HERE T' SET HER *FREE.*

YOU'RE TOO LATE.

MARISSA IS *MINE.*

AS YOU WILL BE.

I AM CLAD IN *ARMOR,* FOOL.

DO YOU THINK TO HARM ME WITH A *STICK?*

NOW YOU WILL *BURN!*

WHA--?!

NOTHING'S HAPPENING!

I'M A MARINE, REMEMBER?

YOU THINK YOUR WILLPOWER CAN MATCH MINE?

REMY-- I PRAY YOU CAN HEAR ME--

--I'LL HOLD HIM BACK AS LONG AS I CAN.

YOU'LL HAVE TO DO THE REST.

THA'S THE SPIRIT, *CHÈRE.*

DON'T QUIT, WON'T LOSE.

TOO MANY JOYOUS PLACES T' SEE, TREATS T'SHARE INNA BIG EASY!

YOU ARE SUCH A *FOOL!*

I *TOLD* YOU, THIS ARMOR IS *IMPREGNABLE!*

AN' AH TOL' YOU, MONSTER MAN--

--EVEN PERFECT TECH HAS ITS WEAKNESS.

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?!*

JUST WHAT AH SAID...

...SAVIN' A WOMAN AH CARE FOR.

SAME AS SHE'D DO F'R ME.

THE STRUGGLE ISN'T EASY--

--ESPECIALLY WITH BONEHEAD FIGHTING JUST AS DESPERATELY TO REGAIN CONTROL.

MARISSA FIGHTS NOW, AS SHE'S ALWAYS DONE.

AND, WITH THE HELP OF THE THIEF WHO'S STOLEN HER HEART, WINS!

MARISSA ONCE MORE CONTROLS HER ARMS AND HANDS.

BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE WHAT COMES NEXT ANY EASIER.

AH DON' WAN' T' *HURT* YOU, *CHÈRE.*

YOU WON'T, MY DARLING-- YOU *CAN'T.*

OH, M'RISSA...

THIS AIN'T RIGHT.

I'M ALIVE. I'M FREE. YOU SAVED ME.

THAT'S WHAT'S RIGHT.

"IF I HEARD THIS STORY, I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT."

BONEHEAD AND ***SUNAMI***--THEY WEREN'T SECOND STRINGERS.

NO ONE'S ***EVER*** BEATEN THEM BEFORE--

--MUCH LESS DONE WHAT GABRIELLA ACCOMPLISHED--COME AWAY FROM BATTLE WITH SUNAMI'S ARMOR AND WEAPONRY.

YOU TWO WOMEN ARE ***WAY*** OUT IN UNCHARTED TERRITORY.

BOUNTY'S RIGHT. YOU'RE SOMETHING TOTALLY ***NEW.***

TRUTH IS, I DUNNO IF IT'S EVEN ***POSSIBLE*** TO SET THINGS RIGHT FOR MARISSA.

PLACE TO START, I'M AFRAID--TO HAVE EVEN THE SLIGHTEST HOPE--IS ACROSS THE STARS.

AND THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES. CONSIDER THIS THE ULTIMATE LONGSHOT...

...BUT IT'S ONE I'M WILLING TO HELP YOU TAKE.

I SWORE AN OATH, CHILD, THE DAY YOU CAME INTO THIS WORLD--

--THAT I'D DO WHATEVER WAS NECESSARY TO KEEP YOU SAFE.

AND AS A DOCTOR, TRY MY BEST TO MAKE YOU WHOLE AGAIN.

NOTHING'S CHANGED.

AN' AH'LL BE BY YOUR SIDE, EVERY STEP O' THE WAY.

YOU GON' NEED SOMEONE T' MAKE Y' LAUGH--

--NOT T' MENTION STEAL Y' THE PRETTIEST THINGS T' WEAR.

OHHHH, REMY--

--MY SWEET, SWEET *LOVE*--

--YOU'LL NEVER KNOW HOW MUCH THOSE WORDS MEAN TO ME--

--BUT IF YOU COME WITH ME, WHO'LL STAND BY 'RO'S SIDE?

WHO'LL PROTECT HER FROM THE MONSTERS THAT HAUNT ***HER*** MEMORIES?

YOUR JOB'S HELPING HER GROW UP INTO WHO SHE'S YET TO BECOME.

YOU NEED ME ***MORE.***

I'M A MARINE. I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.

'RO'S STILL A ***CHILD.***

RIGHT NOW, CAJUN, ***SHE*** NEEDS YOU MORE.

AND WE ***BOTH*** OF US KNOW IT.

AIN'T FAIR.

FAIR'S A WORD THAT'S LOST ALL MEANING.

WHAT MATTERS IS DOING *GOOD*.

WHAT MATTERS IS HAVING *HOPE!*

THAT ONE SPRINGS ETERNAL, DARLIN'.

T'OTHER, NOW *THAT'S* THE CHALLENGE.

MUCH LATER...

WHAT HAPPENED WITH SOLARZ?

BOUNTY TOOK HIM.

ONE MORE FAVOR AH OWE HER.

MAN SHOULD ENJOY AN OUTWORLD PRISON--

--ASSUMIN' HE SURVIVES THE FIRST DAY.

I'M SORRY, BUT IF THIS IS WHAT LOVE'S LIKE, I'M NEVER LETTING IT HAPPEN TO ME.

AH'LL B'LIEVE THAT WHEN AH SEE IT, CHILD.

'COURSE NOT.

'M NOT A CHILD.

I'M SORRY THIS HAPPENED.

ME TOO.

I HOPE SHE GETS BETTER.

ME TOO.

HOW LONG YOU GONNA MOPE?

DUNNO--

--YOU GOT SOMETHIN' MORE FUN IN MIND?

WELL, SINCE YOU ASKED, NOW THAT YOUR OLD BUSINESS IS FINISHED...

...FIGURED IT MIGHT BE ***FUN*** T' MOVE ON AND HAVE OURSELVES A WHOLE NEW ***ADVENTURE!***

And y'know what? That's just what they did!

What an adventure it's been, *mon ami!* Gambit is one of those characters that at once has both a mysterious and storied past, and in building a series to fill in more of the gaps of his history, we specifically wanted to illuminate something from continuity, surprising readers while honoring the character we love so much. And who better to flesh out the untold tales of Remy LeBeau than his co-creator Chris Claremont?!

Astute readers will note that this story actually takes place during UNCANNY X-MEN #267--the second part of Gambit's introductory storyline, where he meets up with the de-aged Storm and begins his path to X-Mandom. Why there specifically? Well, Chris wrote a montage into #267, one where we got only the faintest hint of Gambit and 'Ro's excellent thieving adventures, which gave us the perfect expandable window of "lost" time to explore Gambit in a crucial point of his history!

Artist Sid Kotian lent his considerable artistic talents to GAMBIT, giving us his fun-loving and emotive takes on the characters, paired with dynamite action and detailed locales.

Some of Sid Kotian's warm-up sketches and designs for the series!

Bathing the inks in beautiful color, Espen Grundetjern made sure the series looked nothing less than explosive! Clayton Cowles drew inspiration from the lettering of X-MEN issues of the era while creating something new for this adventure (including defining the interstellar bounty hunters' wild speech treatments)! The legendary Whilce Portacio brought his styling back to the Ragin' Cajun for each of the main covers, with the awesome Alex Sinclair injecting them with his energetic colors!

And those surprises...did you catch Gambit's early use of his X-Treme suit? Oh, and the Shadow King's plan! And Bounty! And...! The series was chock-full of Easter eggs and bits of connectivity that we hope you enjoyed, and if any of that stuff was unfamiliar to you, we definitely recommend digging out some of those classic issues (see below!) for a great read and further insight into the saga you just finished!

It's always fun to go digging in your local comic book shop's back-issue bins, but if you're more digitally inclined, Marvel Unlimited will have these issues at your fingertips! Many of these are also available in collected editions wherever books and comics are sold.

So, what's next for Gambit? Well, we all know he and 'Ro eventually met up with the X-Men and Remy joined the team. But it doesn't seem like Gambit and 'Ro are quite done with their road trip, does it? Perhaps there's more yet untold...

--Mark Basso

UXM #248, *where 'Ro's saga begins in earnest!*

UXM #267, *where the GAMBIT series takes place!*

Fantastic Four (1998) #14 – *Bounty's first appearance!*

X-Men Epic Collection Vol. 17: Dissolution and Rebirth, *collecting Uncanny X-Men #248 through #267!*

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